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Letter dated 25 June 2012 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

In its presidential statement (S/PRST/2011/21) of 14 November 2011, the Security Council requested me to develop a regional strategy for international humanitarian, development and peacebuilding assistance in the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)-affected areas (see annex).

The strategy focuses on international humanitarian, development and peacebuilding assistance to the LRA-affected areas. It aims to promote cross-border mechanisms to improve the protection of civilians, early warning capacity and humanitarian access and response. It addresses issues related to reintegration support for returning internally displaced persons, abductees and former combatants and recommends international action to strengthen the capacity of the affected countries to extend State authority throughout the areas where LRA has a presence.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) BAN Ki-moon

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Annex

Regional strategy to address the threat and impact of the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army

I. Introduction

1. In its presidential statement of 14 November 2011 (S/PRST/2011/21), the Security Council encouraged the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), in coordination with the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU), to engage with the United Nations presences in the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)-affected region and the African Union to develop a regional strategy for: providing international humanitarian, development and peacebuilding assistance in the LRA-affected areas; enhancing cross-border mechanisms to improve the protection of civilians, early warning capacity, humanitarian access and response; and providing appropriate reintegration support for those returning from displacement, abductees and ex-combatants; as well as strengthening the overall capacity of affected States to extend their authority throughout their respective territories. The Security Council reaffirmed the importance of promoting justice and the rule of law, including respect for human rights.

2. This strategy document was developed to guide the efforts of the United Nations and other stakeholders in support of international efforts, led by the African Union, to neutralize the threat posed by LRA and to address the impact of its activities in the four affected countries: the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda. The strategy complements existing initiatives and strategies already being undertaken to counter the LRA threat and reflects the commitment of the United Nations, the affected Member States and their partners to finally resolve the LRA issue and promote peace, stability, economic recovery and sustainable development in the affected regions. It supports current efforts by the international community to increase political and military pressure on LRA, apprehend Joseph Kony and the top leadership of LRA and bring them to justice, enhance the protection of civilians, improve access to humanitarian assistance, encourage the defection and disarmament of LRA elements and their reintegration into their communities, and promote long-term peacebuilding and development in the affected areas. In addition, the strategy complements the efforts of national Governments in the affected areas, recalling that States have the primary responsibility to prevent conflict, ensure that the human rights of all individuals within their territory are respected and protect their populations from war crimes and crimes against humanity. Although the strategy has been developed by the United Nations, the process was carried out in consultation with the African Union, the affected States and their partners, and therefore its success depends on the willingness of all actors to support and implement the proposed actions. This strategy is a living document, to which modifications, adaptations and adjustments could be made in the course of its implementation and in the light of prevailing realities and circumstances.

Background

3. LRA has its origins in northern Uganda, where it launched an offensive against the Government of Uganda during the late 1980s, claiming to represent the interests

of marginalized Acholi communities and aiming to establish a theocratic state based on the biblical 10 commandments and Acholi traditions. Following a protracted conflict, LRA entered into negotiations with the Government of Uganda, notably in 1993/94, and later in 2006. In July 2006, the Government of Southern Sudan, with support from the international community, launched the Juba Peace Process. In March 2008, representatives of the Government of Uganda and LRA concluded the final and all inclusive Peace Accord, but Joseph Kony failed to sign the agreement. Subsequently, in December 2008, after LRA broke the truce that had been put in place to negotiate the Juba Agreement, the Government of Uganda, with the support of its neighbours, launched Operation Lightning Thunder, a military operation targeting the Garamba National Park area in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where LRA had set up base.

4. LRA launched brutal reprisal attacks, killing hundreds of villagers during the Christmas periods of 2009 and 2010. In defiance of the biblical 10 commandments and of Acholi traditions, LRA attacks have typically included killings, abductions (especially of children and women), recruitment and use of children as fighters, rape and other grave sexual violence, including sexual slavery, looting, mutilations and the burning of houses. Although currently believed to be small in number, estimated at between 250 and 500 combatants, the impact of the activities of LRA in the region is considerable. An estimated 445,000 people are currently internally displaced or living as refugees in LRA-affected areas. The majority (341,000) are displaced in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Displaced civilians move mainly into remote villages with limited infrastructure in terms of schools, health centres, police and civil administration. The unpredictability of the many small LRA groups and the well-known viciousness of their attacks among local communities in LRA-affected areas is part of the group's tactic to spread fear. In many towns it is recommended to remain within a 5-7 km radius of the centre of town for security reasons. This limits access to fields, fishing and other means of livelihood support, and there has been a marked increase in dependency on food assistance over the past few years. Communities live in fear, with few means of communication and transportation, and are often left to fend for themselves against the highly mobile and unpredictable LRA groups. The vast majority of internally displaced persons stay with host families, while others live in spontaneous settlements.

5. Most LRA attacks have generally taken place in areas where security, government presence, accessibility and communication infrastructure are poor. It is widely felt that LRA activities are currently limited largely to logistical raids aimed at ensuring its survival. In November 2011, the African Union Peace and Security Council declared LRA a terrorist organization.

II. Initiatives to address the impact and threat of the Lord's Resistance Army

6. Over the years, numerous initiatives have been launched to respond to the threat posed by LRA, including military operations by the four affected countries, engagement of the International Criminal Court and efforts to negotiate peace. The Government of Uganda referred the issue to the Court in 2003 and, in October 2005, the Court issued arrest warrants for Joseph Kony, Vincent Otti, Okot Odhiambo, Dominic Ongwen and Raska Lukwiya for crimes against humanity and war crimes

committed in Uganda from 2002 to 2005. It is believed that only Joseph Kony, Okot Odhiambo and Dominic Ongwen are still alive.

7. In July 2006, the Government of Southern Sudan, with support from the international community, launched the Juba Peace Process. Under the facilitation of former President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on the LRA issue, the peace process gained a great deal of momentum. By March 2008, after months of intensive efforts by regional and international stakeholders to bring the conflict to an end, representatives of the Government of Uganda and LRA finalized the Final Peace Agreement. The process collapsed in April 2008 after Joseph Kony failed to come forward to sign the Agreement. On 30 June 2009, the Secretary-General suspended the facilitation role of his Special Envoy in the light of the lack of space for further political engagement, and informed the Security Council accordingly. The Government of Uganda, however, has been implementing aspects of the peace agreement, including those related to development and peacebuilding in northern Uganda.

8. In May 2010, President Barack Obama signed into law the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act, signalling a greater commitment of the United States to be involved in efforts to stop LRA. In November 2010, President Obama presented to Congress a United States strategy to disarm LRA, and in October 2011, the United States announced the deployment of 100 military advisers to the region to provide advice and logistical support to the armies of the affected countries carrying out operations against LRA.

9. The African Union held a special session of its Assembly on 31 August 2009 in Tripoli and an ordinary session on 15 July 2010 in Kampala. The meetings, inter alia, urged the four affected countries to renew their efforts, including through military action, to neutralize LRA and end its destabilizing activities. The Second Regional Ministerial meeting of the affected countries, held in Addis Ababa in June 2011, defined the strategic objective of a proposed African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA as the "elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army, leading to the creation of a secure and stable environment in the affected countries". The Ministerial meeting defined the different components of the Regional Cooperation Initiative as: a Joint Coordination Mechanism with a secretariat in Bangui, chaired by the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security and comprising Defence Ministers of the affected countries; an African Union Regional Task Force with a brigade comprising 5,000 troops contributed by the four affected countries; and a Regional Task Force headquarters, including a Joint Operations Centre located in Yambio, South Sudan. The Regional Task Force has three sectors headquartered at Dungu, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Obo, Central African Republic, and Nzara, South Sudan whose maintenance, logistics, equipment and operations costs are the responsibility of their respective home governments. However, the African Union will continue to mobilize voluntary contributions from its Member States in a position to make them and from international partners to help build the capacity of the units at the sector level. The institutions would be closely linked to a Joint Information Operations Centre already set up by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in Dungu in the north-eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. On 22 November 2011, the African Union Peace and Security Council authorized the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA, and on the following day the African Union Chairperson appointed

Ambassador Francisco Madeira as his Special Envoy to coordinate the Regional Cooperation Initiative. On 24 March 2011, in Juba, the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA was officially launched, and four senior officers of the African Union Regional Task Force, including the Force Commander, were deployed to Yambio, South Sudan, as a start-up team.

A. Support from the United Nations

10. Over the years, the United Nations has been actively engaged in efforts to address the LRA threat and to mitigate the impact of the group's activities while also aiming to address the structural issues that allow armed groups to emerge and remain active. Most recently, concerned by the long duration of the conflict and the regional nature of its threat to peace and security, the Security Council convened two meetings focusing on the LRA issue in 2011, on 21 July and 14 November. The Council reiterated its grave concern at the atrocities committed by LRA, which have serious humanitarian and human rights consequences, and commended the efforts undertaken by the militaries of the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda to address the LRA threat, encouraged the United Nations Secretary-General to support the African Union Commission in implementing relevant African Union decisions on LRA, and called for United Nations-African Union cooperation on countering the threat posed by the group.

11. The United Nations system has been engaged, inter alia, in providing support to the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA, working with the African Union Special Envoy on the LRA issue, protecting civilians through its peacekeeping missions, carrying out disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration programmes, and providing humanitarian protection and assistance (for a more detailed outline of the United Nations support, see appendix I).

B. Other actors engaged in addressing the Lord's Resistance Army threat

12. Over the years, a wide range of actors, including at the State, non-State, multilateral, bilateral, civil society, non-governmental and community levels, have supported efforts to respond to the LRA threat. Among them are Denmark, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, the European Union, the World Bank and international NGOs active in the LRA-affected areas, which include the Enough Project, Intersos, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Invisible Children, Oxfam, Resolve, Save the Children and Solidarité, and Sponsor Children. Civil society and community groups have also contributed, in particular to the peace process and recovery work in northern Uganda, including in the areas of reintegration and psychosocial support to LRA survivors, transitional justice and incorporating gender perspectives into the country's poverty reduction programmes (for more details on support from other actors, see appendix II).

III. Gaps and areas for improvement

13. While a range of activities have been and are being carried out by a number of actors to address the LRA threat, significant gaps remain. They include limitations

at the operational level, ranging from insufficient financial resources to operationalize the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA to inadequate information to track combatants. There are also gaps in coordination among actors across the affected areas, including governments, security and armed forces, multilateral and bilateral partners, United Nations presences, non-governmental organizations and representatives of civil society. Some of the major gaps in response to the LRA threat are:

(a) Inadequate intelligence/information gathering and analysis. The African Union Regional Task Force lacks sufficient human resources capacity and equipment for information gathering and analysis to enable its forces to carry out their duties effectively. The deployment of Combined Operations Fusion Centres by the armies of the affected countries and the United States, as well as the Joint Information and Operations Centre in Dungu, managed by MONUSCO assist in improving information gathering and analysis. It will therefore be essential that an efficient and effective coordination mechanism is established between those resources and among the United Nations missions in the affected countries to ensure that they are adequately utilized. In the long run, it may also be necessary to support the African Union to develop its own capacity in that area. In addition, there is a gap with regard to gathering, sharing and joint analysis of LRA activities and movements throughout the LRA-affected areas. Towards this end, there is a need to link the Joint Information and Operations Centre in Dungu with the United States information fusion cells that have been established in Obo, Djema, Nzara and the African Union Regional Task Force Joint Operations Centre to increase information-sharing that can be used in planning and implementing operations. This could include harmonization of the different databases on LRA attacks, sharing relevant information in a timely manner, agreeing on common analysis tools to assess incidents, and holding regular planning and coordination meetings;

(b) Strategic and intra-theatre lift. The effectiveness of the African Union Regional Task Force will require adequate mobility assets to conduct operations and react in a timely manner to LRA movements and threats. Similarly, the deployment and rotation of the Regional Task Force troops within the operational theatre will require adequate lift capability. Additional mobility assets are likely to be required in addition to the assets that are deployed along with each of the national contingents that form part of the Regional Task Force;

(c) Communications. There is a need to provide communications equipment for the African Union Regional Task Force forces, including ensuring interoperability of the communications assets among the Regional Task Force, the United Nations and other military forces;

(d) Mission start-up and medical support. The African Union Regional Task Force will require support to establish office premises and functions, accommodations and medical support, including consultations and medical evacuation. Self-sufficiency in terms of fuel and rations will also be needed;

(e) Training. The armies of the four affected countries comprising the African Union Regional Task Force have received some training from their bilateral partners. However, additional training will continue to be needed to ensure common or comparable skill sets across contingents. Training of military components on respect for human rights and international humanitarian law and the protection of civilians should be a priority. It is essential that the Regional Task Force troops are

constantly reorientated and trained on the need to conduct operations in a manner that would not further harm the affected communities.

14. Although MONUSCO has, over the years, processed the repatriation of LRA elements in very small numbers compared with other foreign armed groups, there is an important gap with regard to the overall process of repatriation and reintegration of adults emerging from LRA, including legal frameworks. As MONUSCO is currently developing standard operating procedures for the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of foreign combatants from several armed groups, there should be a similar and joint process involving the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA), MONUSCO and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to develop specific standard operating procedures on LRA.

15. Efforts to expand disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration activities across the LRA-affected countries are hampered by a number of factors. These include the need to mutually coordinate disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration priorities and the planning and conduct of military operations. This entails close coordination between the relevant military authorities and those implementing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration with the aim of maximizing the number of escapees or ex-combatants by opening reception points for defectors while military pressure is maintained on LRA. In addition, there are significant differences in technical knowledge, financial resources and capacities among BINUCA, MONUSCO and UNMISS with regard to disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration and related efforts to address the LRA threat.

16. Although coordination and information-sharing has improved among the United Nations presences in the affected countries, there is a gap with regard to field-level coordination and information sharing (for instance, between the Dungu and Yambio sub-offices on disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration issues). This affects efforts to coordinate actions on cross-border LRA initiatives, including in collaboration with respective local counterparts.

17. The military personnel from the affected countries need clear procedures on how to handle and deal with civilians, in particular children who escape from LRA during military operations. In May 2011, the Uganda People's Defence Forces Chief of Defence Forces signed the standard operating procedures for reception and handover of children separated from LRA. In accordance with the standard operating procedures, the Uganda People's Defence Forces deployed in counter-LRA operations are to alert the United Nations within 48 hours on the presence in the custody of the Uganda People's Defence Forces of children rescued from LRA and hand them over to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), or another designated United Nations or humanitarian agency within seven days of receiving them. However, there is a need to strengthen implementation by all actors and to develop similar agreements with the national armies of the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. The appointment of child protection focal points within the militaries of the four affected countries and the African Union Regional Task Force would facilitate coordination with child protection agencies for proper handover, provision of temporary care, family tracing, transfers, repatriation and reunification of children, including psychosocial

support. There is also a need to strengthen regional coordination among child protection actors.

18. There is a need to enhance the capacities of local communities to share and exchange information on LRA with a view to understanding the threat levels at a regional level. This can be done through their own structures (religious leaders' regional initiative, traditional leaders, local authorities). Regular exchanges between these structures and the United Nations can enhance overall understanding of the LRA threat and help improve United Nations protection activities.

19. The LRA-affected countries have different perspectives on LRA and different military capabilities and capacities. This could hamper efforts to implement counter-LRA activities that rely on cooperation with national military, administrative and civil society counterparts.

20. A number of factors restrict humanitarian access in the LRA-affected areas. These include harsh climatic conditions and the remote, inaccessible and insecure nature of the areas. Road networks are limited, necessitating aerial transportation of humanitarian staff and goods. There is limited capacity among the United Nations presences to facilitate access to humanitarian agencies to the more insecure areas. In the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo this has led to a situation where a number of displaced communities often remain out of the reach of humanitarian organizations. With limited State presence, these communities are often left to fend for themselves against LRA groups, undisciplined armies and other armed elements.

21. Humanitarian protection and assistance have been increased over the past years. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the number of people in LRA-affected areas who received assistance from the World Food Programme increased from 95,000 in 2009, to 113,400 in 2010, and to 223,700 in 2011. In 2011, a total of 11,270 metric tons of food was provided, at the cost of $25 million. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) leads humanitarian protection efforts and has, along with UNICEF and other United Nations agencies and NGOs, expanded protection activities and ensured wider distribution of basic emergency items along with improved early warning mechanisms in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. In the Central African Republic, UNHCR has established a presence to ensure protection monitoring activities in Zemio, Mboki, and Obo. UNHCR, UNICEF and other agencies also provide psychosocial support and family tracing for victims rescued from LRA. Cross-border information-sharing among the humanitarian country teams was strengthened in 2011, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs continues to issue quarterly regional updates on the humanitarian situation and response in LRA-affected areas.

22. Humanitarian life-saving assistance tailored to meet the immediate needs of victims and displaced persons should be accompanied by long-term development programmes. The establishment of State authority would be important to improve support to national efforts in the affected countries so that they can comprehensively address peacebuilding and recovery challenges in LRA-affected areas in a holistic manner.

23. Given the large-scale displacements associated with LRA activities, there is also a strong need to ensure that national authorities in the affected areas respond to

related land conflict issues that arise. Lack of access to land and other resources is an obstacle to the sustainable return of displaced communities to their home areas. More than 90 per cent of the 1.8 million people formerly displaced by the LRA conflict in northern Uganda have returned to their villages of origin or have been integrated elsewhere. Some 80,000 Ugandans currently live in former camps for internally displaced persons, which are increasingly becoming semi-permanent villages. While many formerly displaced Ugandans have resolved to remain in those new rural communities, those who wish to return to their areas of origin often cite impediments, such as landmines, unresolved land disputes and limited access to social services.

24. Issues of rule of law also present major challenges. There is a need to strengthen legal institutions, justice and accountability measures for crimes committed during the conflict, especially given the differences in approach by the four affected countries. Related to this is the need to ensure adherence to international human rights instruments and treaties and to improve monitoring and reporting on human rights in the affected areas.

25. In northern Uganda, peace has returned. The recovery trend is encouraging, and local government capacity has been enhanced. However, factors remain that could derail progress, including economic disparities, high rates of unemployment among youth, disenfranchised communities and frustrations over unfulfilled expectations to reap the dividends of peace. Likewise, the visible participation of women and youth in the reconstruction process remains limited. Although none of those factors in themselves are proximate drivers for a return to conflict, they represent a set of factors that could accelerate conflict escalation if not addressed in a transparent and equitable manner.

IV. Areas of strategic support

26. The regional strategy is built around five broad areas of support formulated as strategic goals and organized according to key themes. The strategic goals are intended to support and strengthen ongoing initiatives led by the LRA-affected countries and the African Union and to address the gaps as previously identified in efforts to combat the LRA threat and address the impact of the group's activities. A series of specific objectives and an indicative list of related actions are identified to achieve those goals within prescribed timelines. The United Nations calls on the LRA-affected countries, the African Union, and regional and international partners to support and implement the proposed actions. The five areas of support are complementary, rather than hierarchical, and together they form an integrated response from the international community as a whole to the LRA threat.

Strategic goal one: the African Union-led Regional Cooperation Initiative against the Lord's Resistance Army is fully operational and implemented

Objective 1.1: adequate resources are mobilized to ensure the full operationalization of the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA

Related actions

- Relevant United Nations actors encourage the LRA-affected countries to provide the 5,000 troops to the African Union Regional Task Force as soon as possible.
- Relevant United Nations actors support the African Union, identifying the gaps and financial resources required to ensure that the 5,000 troops are adequately equipped, including with regard to air capabilities, communications, office and living accommodations, medical support and fuel and rations, as soon as possible, and no later than December 2012.
- Relevant United Nations actors encourage international partners to provide additional training to the 5,000 troops where necessary.
- Relevant United Nations actors organize regular meetings with the African Union and international partners to mobilize financial resources with international partners to ensure the full operationalization of the initiative. In that regard, relevant United Nations actors, in collaboration with the African Union and international partners, should consider the establishment of an airlift network, with regular flights among Yambio/Nzara, Obo and Dungu, to facilitate and enhance movements of stakeholders within the affected area.

Objective 1.2: all aspects of the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA implementation are fully coordinated at the political level

Related actions

- Relevant United Nations actors encourage the African Union Joint Coordination Mechanism to meet at least once every six months to decide on policy and strategy matters related to the African Union Regional Task Force.
- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA, in collaboration with the African Union Special Envoy for the LRA Issue, continues to identify opportunities to enhance the capabilities of the Regional Task Force troops and to engage the Governments of the affected countries to build consensus on a unified approach to the LRA issue.
- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA, in collaboration with the African Union Special Envoy for the LRA Issue, engages troop-contributing countries at the highest political level on a regular basis on issues of common interest, including those related to information gathering and exchange.
- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA, in collaboration with the African Union Special Envoy for the LRA Issue, engages the United Nations presences in the LRA-affected

countries on a regular basis to discuss issues of common interest regarding LRA, including issues related to coordination between the United Nations presences and the African Union Regional Task Force.

- Relevant United Nations actors encourage the African Union to develop a communications strategy on the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA as soon as possible and by no later than December 2012.

Objective 1.3: policies that encourage defections among LRA fighters are in place

Related actions

- Relevant United Nations actors, in close collaboration with the African Union, encourage the LRA-affected countries to put in place policies or provisions that promote defections, for example through the establishment of comprehensive disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration programmes and possible enactment of amnesty laws in line with international standards, to cover LRA elements with the exception of those responsible for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or gross violations of human rights. Children should be excluded from any criminal responsibility for crimes committed while associated with LRA because of the forced nature of their recruitment.
- Relevant United Nations actors, in close collaboration with the African Union, encourage LRA-affected countries to ensure a common approach with respect to a legal framework on issues related to the treatment of defectors and abductees that have escaped from LRA.

Objective 1.4: an effective outreach programme is put in place to raise awareness about the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA

Related activities

- Relevant United Nations actors, in collaboration with the African Union, develop an advocacy strategy, complementary to the communications strategy, as soon as possible and no later than December 2012, to create awareness of initiatives against LRA, promote defections and mobilize support among other countries and actors.
- UNOCA establishes and manages a website for sharing information on LRA with relevant partners as soon as possible and by no later than December 2012.

Strategic goal two: efforts to promote the protection of civilians are enhanced

Objective 2.1: the risk of harm to civilian populations is minimized during military operations to combat the LRA threat

Related actions

- Relevant United Nations actors encourage the African Union Regional Task Force troops and other military actors to prioritize the protection of civilians and uphold international humanitarian law as they engage in operations to track and capture LRA combatants.

- Relevant United Nations actors, in collaboration with other humanitarian actors, support the development of the African Union Strategic Framework for the Protection of Civilians in LRA-affected areas.
- Relevant United Nations actors encourage the African Union Regional Task Force troops to conduct operations in a manner that minimizes the risk of harm to civilian populations in the affected areas. This includes the application of standard operating procedures regarding the treatment, repatriation and reintegration of defectors, abductees and others released from LRA.
- Relevant United Nations actors conduct regular assessments of the military response to LRA with a view to ensuring that it is in compliance with international standards in line with the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy.
- Relevant United Nations actors support the African Union predeployment programmes to ensure that troops are trained on international humanitarian law, human rights and child protection and that refresher courses and in-theatre training on these issues are provided to African Union Regional Task Force troops at least once within a six-month period.
- United Nations inter-agency country-specific security risk management strategies and practices are developed to improve access to populations in LRA-affected areas, taking into account the need for an operating environment more conducive to principled humanitarian operations.

Objective 2.2: coordination among humanitarian, development, gender, child protection, peacekeeping and military actors is enhanced

Related actions

- Relevant United Nations actors establish mechanisms for coordination and information exchange between the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA and the humanitarian actors in the field.
- BINUCA, MONUSCO and UNMISS continue their operations in LRA-affected areas within the constraints of existing resources to create the necessary conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance.
- Relevant United Nations actors strengthen their cooperation with the African Union Regional Task Force on the protection of civilians in LRA-affected areas.
- The United Nations LRA focal points, including United Nations child protection focal points and focal points for sexual and gender-based violence, take part in strategic decision-making and planning exercises related to LRA.
- Relevant United Nations actors develop and share a list of disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration areas of interest (and questions) with child protection actors for incorporation, in accordance with the principles of the cross-border operational plan, between child protection actors in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda, within their interview processes for children escaping from or being rescued from LRA.

- Relevant United Nations actors, in collaboration with international partners and non-governmental organizations, continue to support programmes to establish early warning systems to ensure the protection of civilians.
- Relevant United Nations actors hold regular meetings with military actors, community leaders in LRA-affected areas, child protection agencies, non-governmental organizations and United Nations presences in each of the LRA-affected countries to discuss the LRA threat.

Strategic goal three: current disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration activities are expanded to cover all LRA-affected areas

Objective 3.1: a common and coordinated approach on disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration in LRA-affected countries is developed by United Nations Missions

Related actions

- BINUCA, MONUSCO and UNMISS, within the limits of their mandates, implement the coordinated approach on disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of LRA in coordination with relevant national authorities and/or in accordance with national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. This will include identifying greater synergies between military and disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration operations by supporting the establishment of assembly points where there is a high level of LRA movements and/or the anticipated movement of LRA owing to military pressure or for other reasons.
- MONUSCO provides technical support and backstopping to facilitate BINUCA and UNMISS field offices in implementing the coordinated approach on disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration.
- UNICEF leads in the development of standard operating procedures for national armies in the region on the handover, repatriation and reunification of children who escape or are rescued from LRA on the basis of existing standard operating procedures currently in use by the Uganda People's Defence Force. The standard operating procedures will be developed jointly by relevant child protection actors operating in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, in close collaboration with the respective national armies and the African Union Regional Task Force.
- Repatriation of children associated with armed forces and groups is the primary responsibility of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Under circumstances where this is not possible, resources from BINUCA, MONUSCO and UNMISS are jointly leveraged to facilitate the return of children across borders to their communities of origin with minimum delay.
- BINUCA and UNMISS, in collaboration with the respective Governments, develop procedures for the repatriation of adult LRA escapees from South Sudan and the Central African Republic back to their countries of origin. In addition, BINUCA, MONUSCO and UNMISS, in collaboration with the

respective Governments, establish mechanisms for the repatriation of Congolese adult LRA escapees received in South Sudan and the Central African Republic back to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

- Relevant United Nations actors encourage LRA-affected countries and their partners, including non-governmental and civil society organizations to prioritize the development of programmes and activities for the reintegration of LRA ex-combatants.

Objective 3.2: information exchange and coordination between military and DDRRR actors and operations are increased

Related actions

- BINUCA, MONUSCO and UNMISS enhance field-level coordination and information exchange through regular meetings.
- MONUSCO and UNMISS lead efforts to establish a mechanism for coordination of military operations and cooperation between the forces of MONUSCO and UNMISS as well as relevant military actors in accordance with their respective mandates. This mechanism will be affiliated with African Union Regional Task Force structures as they become operational.
- MONUSCO Joint Information and Operations Centre in Dungu begins regular information-sharing and exchange with the United States information fusion cells and, when operational, the African Union Regional Task Force Joint Operations Centre, especially with regard to time-sensitive and actionable information to increase the effectiveness of military operations.
- Relevant United Nations actors establish sector-specific mechanisms to regularize information exchange on LRA-related activities and movements and other cross-border issues, particularly in the areas of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration and child protection.
- Relevant United Nations actors, in collaboration with the African Union Regional Task Force (as it becomes operational), facilitate regular meetings with relevant humanitarian actors and community leaders in LRA-affected areas to enhance early warning capacity within the affected communities.

Objective 3.3: policies, strategies and legal frameworks relating to DDRRR are harmonized

Related actions

- Relevant United Nations actors develop strategies to address the issue of adult reintegration as follows: in Uganda, programming and the importance of funding for the reintegration of returnees needs to be re-emphasized and reinvigorated; in South Sudan the reintegration of LRA returnees needs to be clarified under the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme; in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a strategy for the reinsertion and reintegration of adult returnees needs to be developed.

- BINUCA, MONUSCO and UNMISS jointly develop specific disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration standard operating procedures on LRA, based on the general standard operating procedures developed by MONUSCO on disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of foreign armed groups. The standard operating procedures to be developed in consultation with national counterparts should include, inter alia, the handover of LRA elements from regional militaries, repatriation to countries of origin, reintegration and provision of medical, psychosocial and other assistance as necessary.

- Relevant United Nations actors encourage the African Union to work with affected Governments to identify a common policy for treatment of LRA escapees and non-indicted LRA ex-combatants who escape or surrender, particularly with respect to amnesty provisions and potential criminal prosecution.

Strategic goal four: a coordinated humanitarian and child protection response is promoted in all LRA-affected areas

Objective 4.1: the most vulnerable groups, particularly children, women, refugees, internally displaced persons and people with specific needs, receive strengthened and coordinated humanitarian protection and assistance

Related actions

- Relevant United Nations actors continue to deliver humanitarian protection and on the basis of need and will be executed within the framework of existing country-specific coordination frameworks. To ensure respect for humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence, humanitarian action remains distinct from the wider political and military objectives of this strategy.

- United Nations humanitarian actors prioritize the provision of assistance to women and children in the affected areas, including refugees and displaced persons.

- United Nations Humanitarian Coordinators and humanitarian country teams continue to enhance information-sharing and analysis on humanitarian needs and priorities in LRA-affected areas.

- Relevant United Nations actors carry out a regional analysis on humanitarian needs and priorities in LRA-affected communities to determine short-, medium- and long-term needs by the end of 2012.

- Humanitarian stakeholders continue discussions on how to improve access and strengthen, as required, humanitarian response capacities in the affected countries.

Strategic goal five: peacebuilding, human rights, rule of law and long-term development support is provided to LRA-affected governments to enable them to establish authority across their territory

Objective 5.1: policies and strategic frameworks conducive to the implementation of human rights, peacebuilding and long-term recovery initiatives for LRA-affected communities and countries are established

Related actions

- LRA-related issues are addressed in relevant country-specific United Nations strategic, peacebuilding and/or development frameworks (e.g., United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, integrated strategic frameworks or peacebuilding support plan) within one year.
- Relevant United Nations peacebuilding, development and human rights actors support the LRA-affected countries to strengthen existing coordination mechanisms within peacebuilding and recovery frameworks to specifically address LRA-affected areas, including gender and human rights issues. This will include support to identifying a lead governing entity or Government focal point to address LRA-related concerns.
- Relevant United Nations peacebuilding, development and human rights actors support LRA-affected countries to strengthen local legal institutions and policies to address land disputes, with support from international partners and specialized NGOs.

Objective 5.2: the capacities of LRA-affected countries to address the human rights, peacebuilding and long-term recovery needs of LRA-affected communities are strengthened

Related actions

- Relevant United Nations actors, in collaboration with the African Union and international partners, including specialized NGOs, assist LRA-affected countries in strengthening their national human rights institutions to fulfil their protection mandate, including by strengthening access to justice and accountability, inter alia, through training and technical support, particularly in the LRA-affected regions.
- Relevant United Nations actors conduct country-specific and regional training for civil society actors in LRA-affected countries to monitor and investigate abuses committed by LRA within one year.
- Relevant United Nations actors, in collaboration with international partners and relevant national authorities, assist in strengthening local justice systems to respond to local needs.

Objective 5.3: programming in human rights, peacebuilding and long-term development for LRA-affected communities is carried out and implemented on the basis of agreed priorities

Related actions

- United Nations human rights actors, in collaboration with relevant national authorities, carry out a regional needs assessment and a best practices study on human rights and abuses in the LRA-affected areas within six months and develop a comprehensive regional plan to support human rights in those areas.
- Relevant United Nations actors enhance joint planning, programming and monitoring in LRA-affected areas identified as priorities (for example, through a United Nations Area Coordinator System) within two years.
- Relevant United Nations actors, in collaboration with international partners, including non-governmental organizations, continue to support the LRA-affected countries in improving basic social services, particularly health services, including maternal health and psychosocial support, education, water and sanitation, with a special focus on LRA-affected areas.
- Relevant United Nations actors, in collaboration with international partners, continue to support LRA-affected countries in improving infrastructure, particularly roads, bridges and airfields, in the LRA-affected areas with a view to improving accessibility and encouraging economic activity.
- Relevant United Nations actors arrange regular country-specific meetings between community leaders in LRA-affected and development actors to discuss priority geographic areas of peacebuilding and recovery intervention in LRA-affected areas.

Objective 5.4: political will to address human rights, peacebuilding and long-term development needs of LRA-affected communities is elicited and sustained

Related actions

- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA, in collaboration with the African Union Special Envoy for the LRA Issue, engages LRA-affected countries at the highest political level on a regular basis on issues related to human rights, peacebuilding and long-term recovery.
- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA, in collaboration with the African Union Special Envoy for the LRA Issue, engages international partners at the highest political level on a regular basis to encourage them to consider sustainable funding for recovery initiatives in LRA-affected areas. This should include advocacy for access to peacebuilding funds in the affected countries.
- Relevant United Nations actors continue to raise awareness on an ongoing basis about the need to address peacebuilding and the long-term development needs of LRA-affected communities.
- Relevant United Nations actors advocate on an ongoing basis for the reintegration of LRA elements through development programmes addressing

both economic recovery and peacebuilding, with special attention on youth and children.

- Relevant United Nations actors prepare and disseminate annual regional human rights LRA reports, with the first one issued within six months.

Objective 5.5: capacity of affected countries to address issues related to the rule of law in LRA affected areas is enhanced

Related actions

- Relevant United Nations actors support the African Union in strengthening the rule of law advisory element in the African Union Regional Task Force structure to provide technical advice and support in matters relating to the rule of law.
- Relevant United Nations actors encourage international partners to continue to support the affected countries in establishing rule of law programmes to improve the capacity and coordination of Government law enforcement agencies, especially the police, judiciary and correctional services, in the areas affected by the LRA in the short, medium and long term.

V. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

27. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the implementation of the regional strategy will be done at the country and regional/international levels, as well as along thematic lines.

28. At the country level, designated African Union and United Nations LRA focal points are expected to document all LRA-related activities conducted in their area of responsibility that pertain to the implementation of this regional strategy. In the Central African Republic, a Working Group on the LRA regularly brings together humanitarian partners, donors and the authorities to share information and develop response strategies on the LRA; this Working Group will report on the LRA activities specific to the Central African Republic.

29. In addition, thematic monitoring will be conducted as follows:

(a) **Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration/disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration:** the United Nations presences in LRA-affected areas will be responsible for the monitoring of all activities related to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration/disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration. They will provide updates on the activities undertaken by all actors in this regard through their regular reports to the Security Council;

(b) **Humanitarian action and protection of civilians:** reports on humanitarian action and the protection of civilians will be provided through the Humanitarian Coordinators in the LRA-affected countries;

(c) **Child protection:** the child protection focal point system will continue to provide the Security Council Working Group with information on violations committed by LRA, as well as associated child protection concerns, through the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and

Armed Conflict. Efforts will be made to ensure synergies and coherence in the nature of the data gathered in all the LRA-affected countries to allow for trend analysis;

(d) **Human rights:** the United Nations will develop and strengthen the relevant national networks of human rights NGOs in the LRA-affected countries using existing resources, with a view to enhancing coordination, information-sharing and reporting on human rights cases. A similar network at the regional level, bringing together all LRA-affected countries, will also be supported to enable human rights reporting, as possible;

(e) **Development and long-term recovery:** the United Nations Area Coordinator System in LRA-affected areas, where it already exists, will be used to report on development and long-term recovery initiatives addressing LRA-affected communities. In LRA-affected countries where such a system does not yet exist, United Nations Area Coordinator Systems will be developed on the basis of existing United Nations country-specific development coordination frameworks, with LRA-dedicated focal points (and funding, if possible).

30. At the regional and international levels, the United Nations Integrated Task Force on the LRA will meet on a monthly basis, bringing together Headquarters and field-based LRA focal points, to discuss various aspects linked to the implementation of the regional strategy. In addition, the United Nations will organize biannual meetings of United Nations and African Union LRA focal points to review implementation of the strategy.

31. Finally, UNOCA will be responsible for overall monitoring and reporting on the regional strategy. In this regard staff will be dedicated to tasks including: supporting the advocacy and resource mobilization role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA and the African Union Special Envoy for the LRA Issue; leading the development of an implementation plan for the United Nations system for the regional strategy; coordinating overall reporting from the different country-specific and thematic monitoring mechanisms; organizing the regular meetings of LRA focal points; and establishing and maintaining a designated website to serve as a clearing house for LRA-related information.

Appendix I

Support from the United Nations

1. **Support to the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA:** the UNOAU is mandated to provide the African Union with support to plan, deploy and manage operations. UNOAU supports the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA in the following areas: (a) development and review of strategic directives and concepts of operations; (b) conceptualization and development of the operational structure of the African Union Initiative; (c) Development of policies and guidelines for the Initiative, including rules of engagement, standard operating procedures and protection of civilian strategies; (d) logistics support planning for the conduct of military operations; (e) technical assessments and surveys of physical infrastructure, communications and logistical support structures for the operationalization of the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA; and (f) support in developing public information strategies for the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA.

2. Since 2011, UNOCA has been active in coordinating the efforts of the United Nations on the LRA issue. It has regularly brought together stakeholders from within and outside the United Nations to exchange and share information, coordinate activities and strategize on how to enhance their collective responses to the LRA threat. In addition, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA has been working with the African Union Special Envoy for the LRA Issue to ensure political commitment at the highest levels in the four affected countries in order to promote unified, joint and coordinated action against LRA.

3. **Support from United Nations peacekeeping and political operations:** MONUSCO and UNMISS carry out regular integrated military patrols in LRA-affected areas to deter threats, maintain situation awareness, build confidence, facilitate the free movement of civilians, secure access to affected areas and contribute to the protection of civilians. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with some 1,200 peacekeepers based in Haut-Uélé, Orientale province, MONUSCO conducts targeted military operations unilaterally as well as jointly with the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) with the aim of protecting civilians and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance. MONUSCO has also enhanced the community alert network in Haut-Uélé and Bas-Uélé, which enables communities to inform local authorities and/or MONUSCO of an impending or actual attack. Furthermore, MONUSCO has also rehabilitated some main roads connecting important population centres, significantly improving access and facilitating trade in the LRA-affected subregion, including the Dungu-Faradje road, the Dungu airstrip and the Dungu-Duru road. Plans are under way to rehabilitate other roads, including the Duru-Bitima road and Dungu-Isiro road.

4. MONUSCO has also established a Joint Information and Operations Centre in Dungu, Haut-Uélé, Democratic Republic of the Congo, to monitor and verify information regarding LRA attacks, analyse the information to produce actionable intelligence for both MONUSCO and FARDC. The centre is the hub for

communicating operational information on LRA, including with neighbouring United Nations presences in the Central African Republic and South Sudan.

5. MONUSCO also supports disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration programmes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This includes the establishment of a regional FM radio sensitization network. Accordingly, MONUSCO has helped to enhance the capacity of Radio Zereda in Obo, Central African Republic, and Radio Yambio in South Sudan. It has also supported Radio Rhinoceros in Faradje, Democratic Republic of the Congo. The FM stations create and broadcast their own "Coming Home" programmes to LRA and share programmes where possible. Another shortwave "Coming Home" programme is broadcast by the Ugandan Broadcasting Corporation based in Kampala. UNMISS, in South Sudan, is involved in extending the regional LRA communication strategy of MONUSCO (linking radio networks in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda). This includes the distribution of LRA sensitization materials and providing assistance for the expansion of radio networks in Western Equatoria State into strategic LRA crossing points in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, and facilitating desertion and regional repatriation programmes.

6. BINUCA assists the Government in improving its communications system to increase its early warning capacity by replicating the existing early warning system developed by MONUSCO. BINUCA also works with national and international partners to develop and implement a strategy to encourage the defection of LRA fighters, as well as a policy for their repatriation to their home countries. In addition, BINUCA facilitates the development of a national disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration strategy in the LRA-affected areas of the country, and deploys two staff to Obo as part of the Joint Information and Operations Centre.

7. **Humanitarian protection and assistance:** an extensive humanitarian response is ongoing in LRA-affected areas of the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan to meet urgent life-saving needs of the most vulnerable groups affected by LRA, in particular the 445,000 displaced and refugees and their host communities. The remote and insecure nature of the affected areas makes it difficult and costly to establish and maintain humanitarian access to populations requiring protection and assistance. Humanitarian partners in the Democratic Republic of the Congo estimate that as of 1 April 2012, humanitarian actors had no access to about 25 per cent of the displaced in Haut-Uélé, while 45 per cent of the displaced in Bas-Uélé district were beyond the reach of humanitarian partners on a regular basis owing to high costs of operations in areas with limited road networks and insecurity.

8. Humanitarian protection and assistance have been increased over the past years. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the number of people in LRA-affected areas who received food assistance from the World Food Programme increased from 95,000 in 2009, to 113,400 in 2010 and 223,700 in 2011. In 2011, a total of 11,270 metric tons of food was provided to the districts, at the cost of $25 million. UNHCR leads humanitarian protection efforts and have along with UNICEF and other United Nations agencies and NGOs expanded protection activities and ensured wider distribution of basic emergency items along with improved early warning

mechanisms, in particular in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the Central African Republic, UNHCR has established presence to ensure protection monitoring activities in Zemio, Mboki and Obo. In South Sudan, UNHCR collaborates with UNICEF and other partners in psychosocial support and family tracing for victims rescued from LRA. Cross-border information-sharing among the humanitarian country teams was strengthened in 2011, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs continues to issue quarterly regional updates on the humanitarian situation and response in LRA-affected areas.

9. While humanitarian partners through advocacy efforts contribute to the development of the wider military and political strategy to address the LRA threat, humanitarian action in the respective affected countries remains distinct from the overall military and political objectives to ensure respect of humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence. The response is planned and executed within the framework of existing country-specific coordination frameworks under the leadership of the respective Humanitarian Coordinators designated in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. Resources are mobilized through country-specific humanitarian appeals and allocations from existing agency budgets.

10. **Child protection:** in 2009, UNICEF, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations recognized the need to strengthen coordinated cross-border responses to child protection owing to concerns that children abducted by LRA in one country were showing up in another. A United Nations child protection focal points system was established to connect actors in the affected countries and strengthen monitoring and reporting of violations committed by LRA against children. Since 2011, the system has been coordinated by UNICEF Uganda. The system provides regular reports on LRA violations to the Security Council's Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, including bimonthly updates, as well as inputs to relevant reports of the Secretary-General on children affected by LRA. LRA has been listed in the reports of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict as a persistent perpetrator of gross human rights violations against children.

11. **Support to human rights, peacebuilding and development programming:** human rights, peacebuilding and development actors have combined efforts in the LRA-affected areas to address long-term structural issues that enable armed groups such as LRA to operate in the affected countries. In the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda, UNDP has used resources from the Peacebuilding Fund to implement programmes on human security and reintegration as part of the efforts to mitigate the risks of conflict. In northern Uganda, the Government, with the support of its partners, is implementing a Peace Recovery and Development Plan (2009-2012) aimed at stabilizing the region, consolidating State authority, rebuilding and empowering communities, revitalizing the economy and promoting peacebuilding and reconciliation. Development and international partners have aligned themselves behind this national strategy.

12. In 2011, the United Nations initiated a peacebuilding programme in northern Uganda implemented by eight agencies, funds and programmes. Financed through the Peacebuilding Fund ($14 million), the programme provides specialized reintegration and integration assistance for households headed by women, internally

displaced persons, returnees and ex-combatants. It also provides psychosocial support, interim care and reunification of children formerly associated with armed groups and other children affected by violence.

13. In the Central African Republic, UNDP collaborates with BINUCA and the United Nations country team on peacebuilding programmes, including the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants, extending State authority, promoting the rule of law and building national capacity to address insecurity. In South Sudan, based on the Government's development plan, UNMISS and the United Nations country team have developed a peacebuilding support plan (mandated by Security Council resolution 1996 (2011)) to address issues of governance, insecurity, long-term economic development, and to promote the rule of law and service delivery across the country.

Appendix II

Other actors engaged in addressing the Lord's Resistance Army threat

1. The Government of the United States of America is a major actor in regional efforts to eliminate the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) threat. The objectives of United States support, as outlined in its LRA strategy, are to increase the protection of civilians, the apprehension or removal of Joseph Kony and senior LRA commanders from the battlefield, the promotion of defections from LRA and support for the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of remaining LRA fighters, and the provision of continued humanitarian relief to affected communities. As part of those objectives, the United States deployed 100 military advisers to the subregion in 2011 to provide logistics support to national armies in the four affected countries that are carrying out operations against the LRA. The United States has also trained some troops of the national armies who will be deployed under the African Union Regional Task Force. In 2011, the United States provided more than $18 million to support food security, humanitarian protection, health, and livelihoods initiatives for internally displaced persons and other affected populations.

2. The European Union has also taken a range of measures in support of international efforts to bring LRA violence to an end and help affected populations. The European Union has provided a package of assistance worth €1.35 million to support the Office of the African Union Special Envoy for the LRA Issue and the establishment of a Joint Operations Centre to enable the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against LRA Regional Task Force to effectively deal with LRA. The European Union has also provided assistance to the affected countries, including through contributions to programmes to encourage defections from LRA and the establishment of early warning radio systems to protect villages.

3. The European Union and its Member States are implementing a number of development assistance programmes in the LRA-affected countries, which aim at strengthening the rule of law, building local governance capacity and reintegrating former members of the LRA into their home communities. In northern Uganda, the European Union has supported a €87.6 million post-conflict development programme over five years, which has helped to facilitate the return of most of those displaced by LRA activities. The European Union also provides humanitarian assistance to the region, contributing €9 million for this purpose in 2011. As co-chair of the informal International Working Group on the LRA with the United States, the European Union is at the forefront of diplomatic efforts to keep the LRA issue on the international agenda and to promote coordination among key stakeholders.

4. In Uganda, support to LRA efforts is coordinated through a dedicated donor group. Partners also participate in the Government-led Peace Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda Technical Working Group. Key partners include the European Union, the United States Agency for International Development, the World Bank, the Department for International Development (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Japan, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. The International Organization for Migration has supported the reintegration component of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in Uganda and supported the country's Amnesty Commission. The

International Organization for Migration has also been active in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including in programmes to improve security in LRA-affected areas. Coordination of child protection has been strengthened; UNICEF leads in the development of standard operating procedures for national armies in the region on the handover, repatriation and reunification of children who escape or are rescued from LRA on the basis of existing standard operating procedures currently in use by the Uganda People's Defence Force. The standard operating procedures will be developed jointly by relevant child protection actors operating in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, in close collaboration with the respective national armies and the African Union Regional Task Force as it becomes operational.

5. International NGOs active in the LRA-affected areas include: Action Against Hunger; Africa Medical and Research Foundation; American Refugee Council; Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief; CARE; Conciliation Resources; Danish Demining Group; Enough Project; International Committee of the Red Cross; International Rescue Committee; Intersos; Invisible Children; Médecins Sans Frontières; Norwegian Refugee Council; Oxfam; Resolve; Save the Children Alliance; Save the Children and Solidarité; Sponsor Children; War Child Holland, UK and USA; Windle Trust; and World Vision. Their work includes advocacy, building political support in the respective countries and within the broader international community on initiatives to end LRA atrocities and help affected communities. Some provide analysis on trends in LRA activities, support efforts to expand community-based early warning systems, reach out to potential LRA defectors and affected communities through radio broadcasts and help in the rehabilitation of formerly abducted children. Others plan and execute humanitarian programmes in the affected areas and conduct family tracing and reunification across borders.

6. Civil society and community groups have contributed to the peace process and recovery work in northern Uganda, including in the areas of reintegration and psychosocial support to LRA survivors, transitional justice and incorporating gender perspectives in the country's poverty reduction programmes. Faith-based organizations, such as the Acholi Inter-Religious Initiative, played a major role in initiating peace talks with LRA. In Uganda, national groups working on the LRA include: Gulu Support the Children Organization; Acholi Religious Peace Initiative; Acholi traditional chiefs; the AIDS Support Organization; Uganda Red Cross; Straight Talk Foundation; Gulu NGO Forum; and Comboni Samaritan. Gulu University serves as a resource centre for peacebuilding research, information and networking in the region.